

adding a catalyst corresponding to claim 27, characterized by the fact that this catalyst is added in a reaction of isomerization, dehydrogenation, hydrogenation and/or hydrogenolysis of mono or poly unsaturated hydrocarbons.--

REMARKS

Responsive to the determination of lack of unity set forth in the Official Action of November 5, 2002, applicants hereby provisionally elect Group I, claims 27-29, with traverse.

The grounds for traverse are as follows:

First, it is noted that the Examiner has had the benefit of a comprehensive initial search by the International Searching Authority. As the Examiner is aware, restriction is proper only when the inventions are independent or distinct as claimed and there is a serious burden on the Examiner prior to the restriction requirement. Thus, a search has already been conducted regarding the claimed invention. It is respectfully submitted that a search of claims 27-52 in the present application fails to present a serious burden to the Examiner.

Second, it is noted that the claimed invention of the present national stage application was subject to examination during the international phase of the PCT application. The International Examiner found no lack of unity upon the same legal standards to the identical facts. Thus, the U.S. Patent Office cannot now contend the examination of the pending claims in the

present application would pose an undue searching burden. Indeed, the U.S. Examiner has the considerable benefit of the search results generated by the International Examiner, on the basis of the pending claims.

Applicants traverse the assertion that the catalyst of Group I, a special technical feature which links the claims of Groups I-V, is anticipated or rendered obvious by EP 0 584 415. Moreover, the Official Action fails to explain why, applying the identical legal standards to the identical claims, the opposite result is now being reached in the present U.S. national phase application, relative to the international application.

At the very least, applicants submit that Groups IV and V should be examined with Group I. Group IV is drawn to hydrocarbon conversion processes of saturated hydrocarbons. Group V is drawn to hydrocarbon conversion processes of unsaturated hydrocarbons. However, both Groups IV and V recite the catalyst of Group I. Thus, it is believed to be apparent that Groups I, IV and V are sufficiently closely related that a full search for either group would yield all prior art relevant to the other.

Thus, in light of the above discussion, therefore, it is believed that applicants are entitled to an action on the merits for all pending claims, in their full scope, in the

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present application. Such action is accordingly respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 51 has been amended as follows:

--51. (amended) [The use of] A method of increasing the rate of a chemical reaction, comprising:

adding a catalyst corresponding to claim 27, characterized by the fact that this catalyst is [used] added in [the] a reaction of isomerization, hydrogenation, dehydrogenation and/or hydrogenolysis of saturated hydrocarbons[, especially alkanes].--

Claim 52 has been amended as follows:

--52. (amended) [The use of] A method of increasing the rate of a chemical reaction, comprising:

adding a catalyst corresponding to claim 27, characterized by the fact that this catalyst is [used] added in [the] a reaction of isomerization, dehydrogenation, hydrogenation and/or hydrogenolysis of mono or poly unsaturated hydrocarbons[, especially alkenes and alkynes].--